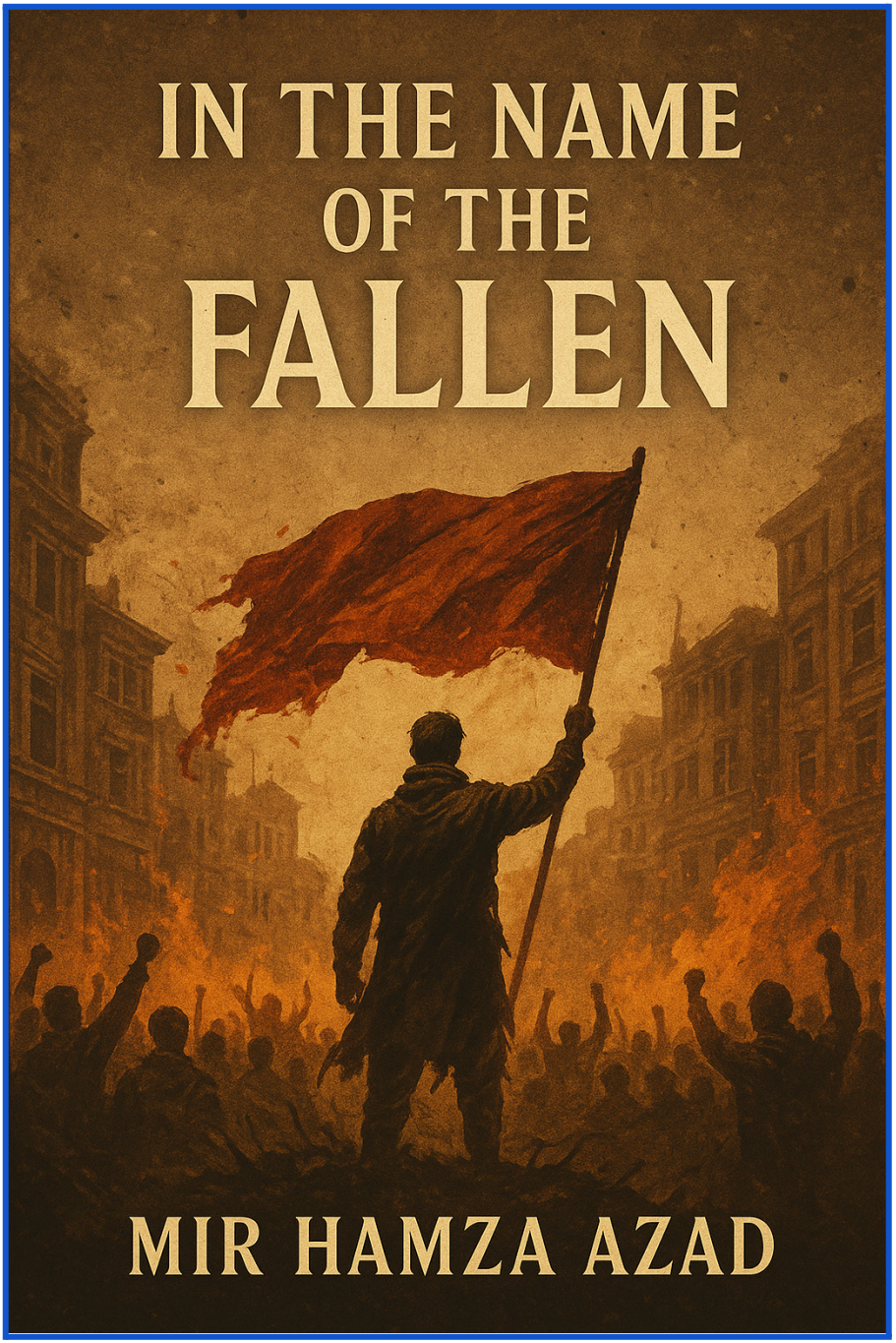
IN THE NAME
OF THE
FALLEN
MIR HAMZA AZAD

# In the Name of the Fallen

*By Mir Hamza Azad*

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## About the Author

*Mir Hamza Azad is an emerging voice in contemporary literature, hailing from the historical town of Loralai, Balochistan. At just 18 years old, he is already making a mark as a storyteller driven by passion, purpose, and a deep connection to his roots.*

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*"In the Name of the Fallen" is his debut novel—an emotionally charged, politically reflective tale that resonates with themes of youth rebellion, societal injustice, and the burning desire for change. Through it, Hamza offers not just a story, but a mirror to realities often ignore*

# Preface

In the heart of the once-proud land of Jandool, where the dust of forgotten glory clouded the skies, a spark was born.

A spark named Sarim.

This story is not just of one boy; it is the story of every soul who dares to stand against oppression, to dream of

a better dawn, and to fight for it with blood, tears, and relentless hope.

May this story remind the forgotten that resistance, even in the darkest times, is not in vain.

# Prologue

In the forgotten valleys of Jandool, where ancient stones whispered of lost glories and silent skies mourned faded dreams, a fire was rekindled by a handful of brave souls.

It was not the thunder of armies nor the decrees of kings that changed the destiny of this land—it was the stubborn hearts of a few who dared to believe that a better world was still possible.

Among them rose Sarim, a boy shaped by sorrow, struggle, and the undying hope sown deep within him by those he loved—and those he lost.

This is a story not only of rebellion, but of devotion.

It is the story of friends who became Comrades, of a love that defied fear, of sacrifices etched forever into the soil of Jandool.

This is the story of those who fell… so that their people might one day rise.

# *Chapter 1:*

## *Whispers of dying land*

The cold wind blew through the narrow streets of Jandool, carrying with it the whispers of a glorious past. Once, these lands had been the heart of prosperity, their history filled with warriors, poets, and wise men who shaped its destiny. Now, it stood as a mere shadow of its former self—its people content with their misery, unwilling to fight for change.

Sarim, a fifteen-year-old boy, walked slowly through the village, his keen eyes observing everything. The cracked mud houses, the fading murals on the walls, the broken wells that no one cared to repair. The elders sat idly under the great banyan tree, telling stories of the past but making no effort to revive it. The young men loitered around, wasting their days in idle chatter and meaningless quarrels. The only thing that remained unchanged was the grand mountains that stood in the distance, silent witnesses to the rise and fall of Jandool.

Sarim clenched his fists. Something inside him refused to accept this fate. How could a land so rich in history fall into such despair?

That evening, as he sat by the fire, his father, a wise man with a voice full of authority, told him an old tale.

“Once, Jandool was a land of warriors, my son. Men who did not bow to tyranny, who did not accept defeat. But time changes men. Comfort makes them weak. And weakness… it destroys nations.”

Sarim listened carefully, his heart pounding. His father’s words struck a chord deep within him.

“But father,” he finally asked, “can’t we change it? Can’t we bring back that lost glory?”

His father sighed, placing a firm hand on his son’s shoulder. “It is not easy, Sarim. A man alone cannot change the world. The people must desire change, and that desire… I do not see in them.”

Sarim did not respond. He knew his father was right. But he also knew something else—if no one was willing to change, he would be the first.

The Weight of Dreams

Sarim shared his thoughts with his closest friends. Azad and Ayaz, his most trusted companions, listened with interest.

“You speak like a man much older than fifteen,” Azad chuckled. “But I admire your spirit.”

Ayaz, the more skeptical one, shook his head. “You want to change Jandool? People here do not care for change. They are comfortable in their chains.”

“They are not chains, Ayaz,” Sarim argued. “They are just… blindfolds. If we show them the truth, they will wake up.”

But not everyone was supportive. Sherdil and Babar, two young men from the village, laughed at Sarim’s ambitions.

“You want to change Jandool? And how exactly will you do that?” Babar mocked. “Preach to the people? Fight battles?”

Sarim did not respond to their taunts. He simply smiled, a fire burning within him.

One day, they would understand.

One day, Jandool would rise again.

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# Chapter 2:

## New beginning, unseen roads

Two years had passed since Sarim first began questioning the world around him. The once naive boy had grown into a young man, shaped by hardship, disappointment, and the unwavering guidance of his father. Jandool remained the same—silent, stagnant, burdened by a people too afraid to change their fate. Sarim had seen enough to understand that the chains of oppression were not made of iron but of fear and submission.

One evening, as the sun dipped behind the hills, his father called him. "Sarim, you have learned much, but there is still more to understand. A teacher can only guide a student so far before another must take his place."

Sarim looked at his father, sensing the weight in his words. "What do you mean, Baba?"

His father smiled faintly. "I have taught you all I could, but now, you must learn from someone who once walked a path like yours. A man who fought, who lost, and who rose again—Abdaal."

Sarim had heard the name before. It was spoken in hushed tones, a figure both feared and respected. "But why him?" Sarim asked.

"Because he knows the cost of change," his father replied.

Abdaal's name was spoken in Jandool like a whispered secret. Some called him a hero, others a rebel, and to many, he was nothing more than a relic of the past—a man lost to time. But those who had lived through the old days knew the truth. Abdaal was not just a name. He was a symbol.

They said that twenty years ago, the sky over Jandool was not always so dim. Abdaal had been young then, burning with the fire of rebellion, his heart unwilling to accept oppression. He had tried to awaken the people, to shake them from their slumber. But Jandool's greatest weakness was its fear of waking up. It found comfort in chains rather than the pain of breaking free. And when Abdaal tried to stir them, they called him a madman instead of a savior.

Then came the time when the rulers of Jandool decided to crush him. He was labeled a traitor, his followers hunted down one by one, and finally, Abdaal himself

was imprisoned. But he did not die—not in body, nor in spirit. When he finally emerged years later, he was not the same man. He was broken, scarred, and alone—but the fire in his eyes remained.

Since then, he had vanished from the world's eyes. Some said he had retreated into the mountains. Others believed he simply watched and waited, searching for someone worthy of hearing his story.

And perhaps, that time had now come.

The night had deepened. The streets of Jandool were silent, as if weighed down by the burden of time itself. But inside Sarim, a storm raged. Tonight, he was walking beside his father toward a man he had only heard about in whispers—Abdaal.

The journey was not long, yet every step felt heavier, as if leading him into the unknown. His father walked ahead, silent, while Sarim followed closely behind. No one stopped them along the way, as if everyone already knew where they were going and why.

Finally, they stopped in front of an old, crumbling hut. A faint light flickered behind its door, the glow of an oil

lamp casting long shadows. His father placed a hand on the door and knocked gently. A moment of silence passed before a deep voice responded from within:

"Come in. I've been expecting you."

Sarim stepped inside. There, sitting before him, was Abdaal—a man aged by time, but with the fire of revolution still burning in his eyes. His face was lined with wrinkles, each one carrying the weight of a story untold.

"This is my son, Sarim," his father said softly.

Abdaal studied Sarim. "Your son? Or just another dreamer?"

Sarim met his gaze, unflinching. In those eyes, he saw time’s testimony, the echoes of pain, but somewhere, buried deep, the flicker of hope as well.

"I do not dream. I seek to change reality," Sarim answered firmly.

Abdaal let out a short chuckle. "Everyone says that... But time will decide if you truly can.”

The room fell silent. Abdaal’s gaze remained fixed on Sarim, as if he were peering into his soul. Sarim did not

look away. He knew that if he wanted Abdaal's trust, he had to stand firm.

"You want to change reality?" Abdaal said slowly. "But reality will break you. It will crush you. It will trample over your hopes. Are you ready for that?"

Sarim hesitated for only a moment before replying, "If I allow myself to be broken, then I was never worthy to begin with."

A faint smile flickered on Abdaal's face, but it vanished just as quickly. "Good… so you think you're ready? We'll see."

He gestured toward a door. "Open this door and go outside. Walk straight to the old market of Jandool. There, you'll find a man called 'Baba Shams.' Tell him Abdaal sent you. See what he gives you."

Sarim's father shot Abdaal a look, but remained silent. Sarim simply nodded and walked out. A strange smile played on Abdaal's lips.

"This is the first test. If he succeeds, we'll talk further. If not..." Abdaal shrugged, "You know, Jandool has no place for the weak."

Sarim stepped into the darkness. The silence of the night stretched beneath his feet, but a strange unease settled in his heart. Why had Abdaal sent him? Who was Baba Shams? And, most importantly, what was this test really about?

To reach the old market of Jandool, he had to pass through narrow alleys. These streets, weighed down by time, whispered stories of the past. Even during the day, the market was never too lively, but at night, it felt almost ghostly.

Finally, he reached a dimly lit alley where a small lantern flickered. In its weak glow, he saw an old man sitting on a woven mat. His beard was white, but his eyes were sharp and filled with light. This had to be Baba Shams.

Sarim took a deep breath, then stepped forward.

"Baba Shams?" he asked softly.

The old man lifted his head and looked at him intently. "Abdaal sent you?"

Sarim, surprised, nodded.

Baba Shams remained silent for a moment, then reached beneath his mat and pulled out a small, dust-covered sack.

"Take this. Give it to Abdaal. And listen..." he paused. "If anyone tries to stop you on the way, do not hand it over. No matter what happens."

Sarim took the sack. It was heavier than he expected, as if something valuable lay inside.

"What is it?" he asked.

Baba Shams gave a knowing smile. "That is for Abdaal to know. Your test begins now, boy. Let’s see if you can deliver it safely.”

Sarim gripped the sack tightly and turned back toward his path. Baba Shams’ words still echoed in his mind—"No matter what happens, do not give this to anyone."

A cold wind whispered through the alleys, and the night was eerily silent. A strange feeling crept into Sarim’s heart, as if he was being watched.

He had only taken a few steps when a voice called from behind, "Stop!"

Sarim froze for a second. Turning back, he saw two men standing in the shadows, their eyes gleaming in the dim light.

"Come with us," one of them said in a calm but firm voice. "We need to talk."

Sarim looked at them for a brief moment but kept walking.

"Where are you going?" the second man stepped forward, blocking his path. "Hand over what you're carrying."

Sarim tightened his grip. "This has nothing to do with you. Move aside!"

The first man let out a small chuckle. "We know Abdaal sent you. And we also know what you took from Baba Shams."

Sarim's heart pounded, but he held his ground. "Step aside, or else..."

"Or else what?" the second man smirked.

Suddenly, the first man lunged forward, trying to grab Sarim's arm. But Sarim reacted instantly—he snatched

up a stone from the ground and hurled it straight at the man’s forehead.

The man let out a pained cry.

This was his chance—Sarim turned and ran as fast as he could!

His heart pounded, and his breathing grew heavy. The dark alleys blurred past him, but the voices behind told him they were still chasing him.

"He’s here! Stop him!" a deep voice echoed.

Sarim leaped into a narrow alley and pressed himself against a wall, trying to slow his breathing. The footsteps grew louder.

"Where did he go?" one man growled.

"He must be hiding somewhere!" the other snapped.

Sarim held his breath. He stayed still, waiting. The footsteps started fading away. Carefully, he stepped forward. But suddenly—

"There he is!" a voice roared.

Before he could react, one of the men grabbed his arm. Sarim twisted, using all his strength to break free. He yanked himself back, but the second man stepped in front of him.

"We told you—give it to us!" he snarled.

Sarim had no time to think. Holding the sack tightly, he planted one foot on the wall and jumped. The wall wasn't too high, but for a moment, it felt like he might fall. Somehow, he balanced himself and landed in another alley.

Now he was free—but he still had to reach Abdaal!

Sarim's breath was uneven. He turned back—those two men were still chasing him. But now, they were more cautious, knowing that Sarim wouldn't give up easily.

The alleys were getting narrower, with old walls and small doors on either side. Sarim knew that if he didn't get far enough, they would catch him. Suddenly, his eyes caught sight of a small wooden door, slightly open.

Without wasting time, he slipped inside and shut the door behind him. The inside was pitch dark. He felt the walls with his hands and carefully moved forward.

"Where did he go?" a voice called from outside.

"He must be hiding somewhere here. Search!" another voice commanded.

Sarim held his breath, pressing himself against the wall. The footsteps outside grew louder, then started to fade. After a few moments, silence took over.

Are they gone? Sarim wondered.

But he couldn’t stay here for long. He had to reach Abdaal. He moved forward, found another door, and pushed it open. He was now in another alley—this one had a little more light, and the smell of burning wood filled the air.

Sarim quickened his steps. He knew Abdaal wasn’t far, but the road wasn’t easy. He passed through an old marketplace where a few people were still awake. An old man sat in a corner carving wood, while two women stood at a doorway, deep in conversation. Sarim kept his gaze down and moved swiftly.

At last, he reached an old building. The door was closed, but he knew this was the way to Abdaal.

Did I arrive in time?

Just as he was about to knock, someone called his name from behind—

"Sarim!"

A chill ran through him. Slowly, he turned around.

A shadowy figure stood at the edge of the alley. "You took too long to come," the voice echoed.

Sarim immediately realized—it was Abdaal.

Abdaal’s Test

Abdaal stepped forward. He was a tall, strong man with sharp eyes that seemed to pierce through Sarim’s thoughts. His face held both sternness and an odd sense of calm.

"Do you know why you were given this bag?" Abdaal asked.

Sarim nodded. "Baba Shams told me it was important. He said I must deliver it no matter what."

Abdaal studied him for a moment before speaking again. "If you don't know what's inside, would you still give your life for it?"

Sarim's heart pounded. Was he truly willing to fight for something whose true value he didn't even know?

But then, he told himself—This isn't just a bag. It's a responsibility. And I cannot run from responsibility.

"Yes," he answered firmly. "I would give my life for it." Abdaal gave a slight smile, one that wasn't easily earned.

"Then from tonight, your trial begins," Abdaal said. "This isn't just a journey. This is a war. And in this war, only those who conquer their fears will survive."

Abdaal took the bag, opened it, and looked inside. Then, after a brief pause, he said, "Come with me. The night is not over yet."

Sarim knew this was only the beginning.

# Chapter 3:

## The Awakening of Fire

The morning air in Jandool carried the scent of damp earth and the distant smoke of early fires. Sarim stood at the edge of a ruined courtyard, his hands clenched into fists, his body aching from the relentless training of the past weeks. The sun had barely risen, yet Abdaal was already waiting for him.

"You hesitate too much," Abdaal said, his voice firm but calm. "Your body is strong, but your heart still wavers."

Sarim wiped the sweat from his brow. "I don't hesitate. I just—"

"You do," Abdaal interrupted. "Your mind is still caught between fear and purpose. You must learn to trust your decisions, or the world will make them for you."

Sarim wanted to argue, but he knew Abdaal was right. Ever since he had left his father’s protection and come under Abdaal’s guidance, his life had become a cycle of exhaustion, discipline, and realization. Every day was a new test. The strikes of wooden swords against his arms, the sleepless nights spent memorizing the names and movements of Jandool’s enemies, the cold silence of abandoned streets—each moment shaped him, stripped him of hesitation, and built something stronger in its place.

But the world did not change with him. Jandool remained asleep, content in its suffering. The people feared their rulers yet refused to rise against them. The merchants bowed to unjust taxes. The elders whispered about the past but did nothing for the future.

Sarim had once believed that if he could endure hardship, others would follow. But now he saw the truth—courage was not given. It had to be forced into the hearts of men.

That afternoon, Sarim and Abdaal walked through the streets of Jandool, their faces hidden beneath their cloaks. The marketplace was alive with voices—bargaining, arguing, laughing—but beneath the noise, Sarim could sense something else.

“Fear”.

A group of soldiers stood near a spice merchant, their presence like a dark cloud over the street. The merchant, an old man with trembling hands, counted his coins carefully, his face pale. One of the soldiers—a broad-shouldered man with a scar across his cheek—leaned in.

"The tax has increased," the soldier said, his voice laced with mockery. "You owe more."

The merchant swallowed hard. "But sir, I have already paid more than last week—"

The soldier’s hand shot out, grabbing the man by the collar. "And now you will pay even more. Or should we take your shop instead?"

Sarim felt his anger rise. His fingers twitched toward the dagger hidden beneath his cloak. But before he could move, Abdaal placed a firm hand on his shoulder.

"Not yet," Abdaal whispered. "This is not the battle. Watch."

The merchant, shaking, reached into a hidden pouch and handed over a few more coins. The soldier smirked and stepped back, satisfied. The crowd that had gathered quickly dispersed, each person returning to their business as if nothing had happened.

Sarim clenched his teeth. This is why Jandool does not rise. Because fear weighs heavier than injustice.

### *The first light of a shattered soul*

That evening, as the sun dipped behind the distant hills, Sarim wandered through the streets alone. His mind was restless, filled with questions and unresolved

fury. He had always thought that resistance would come naturally, that people would rise once given the chance. But now, he wasn't sure.

He stepped into a wide street, one of the few places in Jandool that still held remnants of its past glory. The stone pathways were worn but strong, the old buildings standing with quiet dignity. The street was filled with people—merchants packing up their stalls, children chasing each other, elders gathered in hushed conversation.

Yet, for Sarim, there was silence.

And then, he saw her.

At the far end of the street, a girl stood among the fading light. She wore a simple but elegant shawl, draped over her dark hair. Her presence was unlike anyone else's—as if the world around her had slowed, as if she alone existed in this moment.

"Zalaikha".

The name had not yet been spoken, yet Sarim felt it in the air, as if the winds carried its weight toward him. She was like the coming of spring after a harsh winter, like the first light breaking through the darkness.

For a moment, their eyes met.

Everything else faded—the noise, the movement, the weight of the world.

Just an exchange of glances. No words. No gestures.

Yet, in that silence, something began.

Something that would change Sarim’s life forever.

Sarim walked away from the wide street, his heart beating louder than his footsteps. The glance he had exchanged with Zalaikha lingered in his mind, like a whisper that refused to fade.

He did not know her. He had never seen her before. Yet, in that fleeting moment, something had changed within him.

"Who was she?" he muttered to himself.

But there was no answer.

As he reached the outskirts of the market, Abdaal was waiting for him, arms crossed, eyes sharp as ever.

"You are late," Abdaal remarked.

Sarim hesitated for a brief second, then shook his head. "I was thinking."

"Thinking? About what?" Abdaal asked.

Sarim hesitated again. He could not bring himself to mention Zalaikha. The moment felt too personal, too unexplainable. Instead, he spoke of what had been weighing on his heart all day.

"Jandool," he said. "The people. The way they submit to oppression without resistance. We train, we prepare—but will they ever rise?"

Abdaal exhaled slowly, as if he had been waiting for this question.

"They will," he said. "But not because they want to. Because they will have no other choice."

Sarim frowned. "And if they choose slavery over struggle?"

Abdaal placed a hand on Sarim’s shoulder. "Then we will teach them. We will make them see what they refuse to see now."

Sarim nodded, but his thoughts remained divided. The people of Jandool needed a leader—someone to wake them up. But was he ready for that role?

And why, despite everything, did his mind keep drifting back to her?

The following days were relentless. Abdaal pushed Sarim beyond his limits—physically, mentally, and emotionally.

At dawn, he trained with weapons, learning how to strike with precision, how to dodge, how to endure pain without hesitation. By midday, he was sent into the streets, tasked with observing the movements of the soldiers, the merchants, the common people. He had to learn their habits, their weaknesses.

But the hardest part came at night.

Abdaal made him sit in silence, staring at a single candle’s flame, forcing him to master his emotions.

"Fear is a disease," Abdaal would say. "And emotions are its servants. Control them, or they will control you."

Some nights, Sarim succeeded. Other nights, he failed. But slowly, he was changing.

And Jandool was changing too.

Small acts of defiance began to spread—an old man refusing to pay extra taxes, a merchant speaking against corruption, a soldier questioning his orders. The city was still asleep, but it was stirring.

Yet, Sarim knew that change would not come without a price.

### *Unspoken words, unbroken bonds*

One evening, as Sarim walked through the darkened streets, he heard voices in a narrow alley. "You owe the tax," a soldier growled.

"I paid it," an older man replied. "You are demanding more than what is written."

Sarim recognized the voice—it was the spice merchant from the market. The same one he had seen being threatened days ago.

Sarim stepped forward, his hand resting on the hilt of his dagger. The soldier had his back to him, unaware of his presence. The merchant's hands trembled as he tried to defend himself.

Sarim made his decision.

Before the soldier could react, Sarim struck—swift, precise. The soldier collapsed to the ground, unconscious.

The merchant gasped, staring at Sarim with wide eyes. "Who are you?"

Sarim hesitated. Then, in a voice that carried more certainty than he felt, he answered:

"I am Sarim."

The merchant’s expression changed. The name was not unfamiliar. It had been whispered in the streets, spoken in hushed tones by those who dared to hope.

Sarim turned and disappeared into the night.

He had taken his first step into the battle for Jandool. There was no turning back now.

The night after Sarim had saved the spice merchant, he found himself unable to sleep. His name had been spoken in the streets, whispered in hushed conversations. He had taken his first step into the open. There was no going back now.

Abdaal had not spoken much about the incident. He simply nodded when Sarim returned that night, as if he had expected this moment to come.

But Sarim knew the weight of what he had done. A soldier had been left unconscious, a merchant had been saved—and now, Sarim had made his presence known. The resistance had begun.

The next evening, Sarim walked through the marketplace again, his hood drawn low over his face. He passed the spice stall, expecting to see the merchant he had saved. But instead, he saw her.

“Zalaikha”.

She stood behind the stall, arranging small jars of saffron and cinnamon. She moved with quiet grace, her presence effortless yet striking. Sarim felt his steps slow.

She had not seen him yet. But something about her expression—serene yet distant—told him that she knew.

As Sarim approached, the merchant stepped out from behind the stall, catching sight of him. The old man’s eyes widened slightly, recognition flickering within them.

"You," the merchant said under his breath. He glanced around quickly, as if afraid someone might overhear. "You are—"

Sarim gave a slight shake of his head. "I am no one," he said softly.

The merchant studied him for a moment, then nodded in understanding. "Come," he said. "A man who risks his life for another deserves at least a cup of tea."

Sarim hesitated, but then followed.

Zalaikha lifted her eyes just as he passed by her. A

glance—just like before.

But this time, it was not in a crowded street. This time, it was real.

The merchant led Sarim to a small seating area behind the stall. The aroma of spices filled the air, blending with the distant sounds of the marketplace. He poured tea into a clay cup and handed it to Sarim.

"You saved me," the merchant said after a long pause. "That night. I know it was you." Sarim took a slow sip, saying nothing.

The merchant chuckled. "You need not confirm it. I have lived long enough to recognize bravery when I see it. But tell me—why?"

Sarim finally spoke. "Because no one else would."

The merchant nodded, as if that answer was enough. "The people of Jandool are afraid. They do not fight because they do not believe they can win." He looked directly at Sarim. "But perhaps that will change soon."

A soft sound came from behind them. Sarim turned his head slightly and saw her again.

Zalaikha had brought another cup of tea, setting it quietly on the wooden table before stepping back. Her hands were steady, but Sarim noticed the way she

hesitated for just a moment—just long enough for their eyes to meet.

For the first time, she was more than just a glance in the crowd.

But neither of them spoke.

Because in that silence, something unspoken passed between them.

Something neither of them could yet understand.

Sarim left the spice stall as the evening breeze whispered through the narrow streets of Jandool. The tea had long since cooled, the conversation with the merchant had ended, but the glance—that single moment with Zalaikha—remained.

It should not have mattered. He had faced warriors, debated with Abdaal, challenged the silence of the people—but one look from her felt like it had unsettled something deep within him.

He did not even know her name.

But as he walked away, the merchant's voice carried after him.

"My daughter—Zalaikha—she will bring you tea again if you ever return." Sarim did not turn back.

But the name stayed with him.

That night, Sarim trained harder than ever. Abdaal was merciless, pushing him beyond exhaustion. Each strike, each block, each movement was designed to sharpen him for the battles ahead.

But his mind was not clear.

It was not doubt. Not fear. But something else.

"You're distracted," Abdaal observed as he parried Sarim’s blow with ease. "What is it?"

Sarim exhaled sharply, stepping back. He hesitated. Then, without meaning to, the words escaped his lips.

"A girl."

Abdaal raised an eyebrow but said nothing. He simply nodded, as if this was expected.

"You do not have time for distractions, Sarim."

"It is not a distraction," Sarim said quickly. "I do not even know what it is."

Abdaal gave him a long, knowing look. "Then figure it out. Before it figures you out first."

Sarim said nothing.

Because he already knew—it had already begun to consume him.

Sarim did not intend to return to the spice stall the next evening.

But somehow, his steps led him there.

The market was quieter at this hour, shadows stretching long across the uneven streets. The merchant was speaking with a customer, but Zalaikha was alone, arranging jars just as she had been the day before.

Sarim stopped a short distance away, watching her.

And then, as if sensing his presence, she turned.

This time, neither of them looked away.

She did not speak, nor did he. But there was something different in her eyes—something curious, something knowing.

And then, without a word, she reached for a small cup and poured tea.

She stepped forward, silent as ever, and placed it on the wooden stall. Then, just as before, she withdrew.

An invitation—wordless, yet undeniable.

Sarim hesitated only for a moment.

Then, he stepped forward and picked up the cup.

Their story had begun.

Sarim lifted the cup of tea, feeling its warmth against his fingers. He did not drink immediately. Instead, his gaze remained fixed on the girl who had placed it before him.

Zalaikha had already turned back to her work, her hands moving delicately over the glass jars, arranging spices with quiet precision. She did not look at him again, but she did not have to.

The silence between them was heavier than words.

Sarim finally took a sip. The tea was rich, laced with a faint trace of cinnamon—not unlike the moment itself, lingering, unspoken, yet unforgettable.

The merchant returned, catching sight of Sarim with the cup. He chuckled softly. "It seems you like our tea, young man."

Sarim placed the cup down carefully. "Perhaps."

The merchant smiled knowingly. "Then you must visit more often. There is always tea here for those who walk the right path."

Sarim knew the words held meaning beyond their surface. He nodded in acknowledgment, then stepped away, vanishing into the evening streets.

Behind him, Zalaikha remained still for a moment, her hands pausing over the spice jars, before she finally continued her work.

Sarim did not tell Abdaal about his return to the market.

But Abdaal saw it in his eyes.

"You went back," he stated. It was not a question.

Sarim did not deny it. "It does not matter."

Abdaal studied him, then sighed. "Perhaps not yet. But it will."

Sarim did not answer. Because deep down, he already knew the truth.

Zalaikha was not just a passing thought anymore.

She was a fire. And like all fires, she would grow.

Days passed, but Sarim did not return to the spice stall.

Not because he did not want to. But because his world was shifting too quickly.

The whispers of resistance were spreading in Jandool. The soldiers were restless. The people were watching. And the name ‘Sarim’ was beginning to carry weight.

One night, as Sarim and Abdaal moved through the shadows of the city, watching and listening, they saw something that made them pause.

A group of soldiers had gathered in front of a small home. A merchant’s home.

Sarim’s breath caught.

The spice merchant.

And then, just beyond the torchlight, he saw her.

Zalaikha stood at the doorway, her face pale but her stance unmoving. She was shielding her father with her own presence, defying the soldiers without speaking a word.

Sarim felt something stir within him—something fierce, something protective.

Abdaal placed a hand on his shoulder. "Wait," he whispered. "Not yet." But Sarim’s fists clenched.

He could not wait.

Not this time.

Not when she was standing in the fire.

Sarim felt his pulse quicken as he watched the scene unfold. The soldiers stood before the spice merchant’s home, their torches casting flickering shadows across the walls. The merchant stood firm, his expression a mixture of defiance and fear.

And in front of him—Zalaikha.

She stood like a shield, her dark eyes steady, her chin lifted in quiet resistance. The soldiers spoke in low, threatening voices, but she did not move.

Sarim's fingers tightened around the hilt of his dagger.

He wanted to act.

He needed to act.

But Abdaal’s grip on his shoulder tightened. "Not yet," the old warrior murmured. "If you strike now, you will start a war before we are ready."

Sarim exhaled sharply, forcing himself to stay in the shadows. His body burned with restraint, but he trusted Abdaal. For now.

One of the soldiers sneered at the merchant. "You owe a tax," he spat. "You should be grateful we do not take more than gold."

Zalaikha’s jaw clenched. "We have paid our dues," she said, her voice controlled but firm. The soldier smirked. "Then pay again."

He stepped forward, reaching for her.

And that was when Sarim moved.

A single stone, small yet sharp, flew through the darkness and struck the soldier’s hand. He recoiled with a curse, glaring around wildly.

The merchant gasped. Zalaikha’s eyes widened.

Sarim had already disappeared back into the alley.
But she knew.

The soldiers grumbled but did not linger. They took their payment and left, their torches flickering into the night.

The merchant exhaled in relief. "That could have been worse," he muttered.

Zalaikha, however, turned toward the darkness where the stone had come from. Her fingers brushed over the place where it had landed.

She did not say a word.

But she did not need to.

Sarim returned to Abdaal’s hideout, his heart still pounding.

"You were reckless," Abdaal said, but there was no anger in his voice.

Sarim didn’t respond. He simply stared at his hands, as if trying to understand what had just happened.

"She knew it was you," Abdaal continued after a pause.

Sarim glanced up. "How can you be sure?"

Abdaal gave a rare smile. "Because you threw the stone in a way only she could understand. And she did."

Sarim exhaled. He did not know what this meant—only that something had changed.

Zalaikha was no longer just a thought.

She was real. And she knew.

Days passed, but Sarim did not return to the market.

He trained harder. He planned more with Abdaal. The resistance grew stronger.

But every time he closed his eyes, he saw her.

One evening, as he walked through the streets disguised among the crowd, he heard a soft voice behind him.

"You throw stones like a man who does not want to be seen. But I saw you anyway." Sarim froze.

He turned—and there she was.

Zalaikha stood before him, her expression unreadable, her presence like the quiet wind before a storm.

He opened his mouth to speak.

But she simply stepped past him, her shoulder barely brushing his as she whispered, "Thank you." And then she was gone.

Sarim stood there, rooted to the spot, his heart pounding with something he could not name.

But one thing was certain—this was just the beginning.

# Chapter 4:

## The Flames of Resistance

Five years had passed.The streets of Jandool no longer belonged to the rulers alone.

Sarim and his Comrades had grown stronger—not just in numbers, but in spirit.

What had begun as whispers of defiance had now turned into a storm of resistance.

They had become a thorn in the side of the rulers.

And the rulers wanted them gone.

Endless Imprisonments, Endless Resolve

For years, they had been hunted,Captured, Imprisoned,Thrown into dark cells with chains around their wrists.

But every time they were released—they returned to the streets.

Abdaal stood with them, unshaken. "They fear you," he had said. "That is why they keep trying to break you."

And Sarim knew he was right.

The rulers could jail them. Beat them. Starve them.

But they could not silence them.

Because every time they rose again, they rose stronger.

Until the rulers realized—imprisonment was not enough.

The Comrades  had to die.

And so, the bloodshed began.

### *Bakhtar's Execution*: *The First Blow*

It started with Bakhtar.He had been a fierce warrior, always at the front lines. Always the first to charge.

One night, he was captured while guiding a group of Comrades.It was a moment of sorrow and anger for Sarim and Comrades.

The next morning, a decree was spread across Jandool:

"Tomorrow at dawn, the traitor Bakhtar will be executed."

Sarim and his Comrades felt their world stop.

They had all known death could come for them at any time.But knowing did not make it easier.The night before the execution, they tried to plan a rescue. But the city was surrounded.The soldiers had been waiting

for this moment—and they were ready. But Abdaal knew what they would pay if they tried to do that. He stopped them and ordered them to stay hidden till morning.The next morning, the streets of Jandool were silent.People gathered in the marketplace, their faces pale with grief.

The executioner raised his sword. Bakhtar did not flinch.

"Do you have any last words?" the executioner asked mockingly.

Bakhtar’s eyes found Sarim in the crowd.

"Yes," he said, his voice loud and unwavering.

“You are going to kill me but You cannot kill the idea which has access to every comrade’s soul. Remember, from now the name of Bakhtar will be louder than before." He said, “One day, the Jandool will be as it once was.” The sword fell.

And Jandool trembled.

The Year After Bakhtar’s Death

The people did not forget.

If the rulers had hoped Bakhtar’s death would crush them, they were wrong.

Instead, it fueled them.

The resistance grew. More people joined. More voices rose.

Even some who had once doubted them—like Sherdil and others—now stood beside them.

But not all.

Many still feared the rulers. Feared the consequences.

They whispered in dark corners, afraid to speak too loudly.

And Sarim understood. Fear was a powerful chain.

But he also knew—chains could be broken.

And that chains will be broken once

And one year after Bakhtar’s death, the rulers were still afraid a lot. They were going tomake another mistake.

And that mistake will be the rise of a new wave in Jandool, a Shok for Sarime and the rest comrades.

## *Another Loss That Shook Jandool*

Azad had been the heart of the resistance.

The loudest voice. The unbreakable spirit.

He had survived torture, imprisonment—but in the end, the rulers found a way to take him.

One evening, he was captured during a raid.

The next morning, Sarim awoke to find a message nailed to the wall of their hideout:

"Tomorrow at sunrise, the traitor Azad will be executed."

Sarim did not move. Did not breathe.

His hands clenched into fists.

The words blurred before his eyes.

No.

Not Azad.

Not him.

Sarim ran. Through streets, through alleys—searching, hoping, praying.

But there was no miracle.

Azad was gone.

And the sun still rose.

The Last Glance

The execution square was filled before dawn.

But unlike Bakhtar's execution, this time, the people were not silent.

They muttered. They clenched their fists. They were angry.

And Sarim stood among them, his heart pounding.

Then he saw him.

Azad, walking forward in chains.

Bruised. Bleeding.

But unbroken.

The general sneered. "This is what happens to those who defy us."

Azad did not answer.

Instead, he turned his head.

And for the last time—his eyes met Sarim’s.

Sarim’s breath caught.

There were no words.

No cries.

Just a look—one that held everything.

Their childhood. Their laughter. Their dreams of freedom.

Azad smiled, just a little.

And Sarim shattered.

"Do not waste my death," Azad’s eyes seemed to say. "Make it mean something."

The sword rose.

The world blurred.

The sword fell.

And Jandool erupted.

### *The Aftermath of Loss*

Sarim did not speak for days.

The Comrades did not laugh. Did not joke.

Jandool had lost more than a warrior that day.

They had lost a brother.

Sarim stood alone that night, staring at the stars, his hands curled into fists.

He could still see Azad's eyes.

Still hear his voice.

And for the first time in five years—Sarim wept.

Zalaikha found him, placing a gentle hand on his shoulder.

"You have to keep fighting."

His voice was hollow. "I don't know how."

She knelt beside him, whispering, "Then fight for him."

Sarim wiped his tears.

And when he rose, his sorrow had turned to steel.

"They have taken enough from us," he whispered. "Now, we take everything from them."

The rulers had made a mistake.

They had taken Azad’s life.

But they had left his fire burning in Sarim’s heart.

And that fire would never die.

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# Chapter 5:

## The crops of Sacrifices

The wind carried the whispers of sorrow through the narrow streets of Jandool. It had been weeks since

Azad’s death, yet his absence was a wound that refused to heal. Sarim sat at the highest point of the hills overlooking the town, his eyes scanning the land that had become both his battlefield and his home. Below him, the people moved like shadows, weighed down by fear and grief. But something else had begun to stir within them—rage.

Azad’s death had not broken them. It had awakened them.

The Weight of Loss

The Comrades had buried Azad in the dead of night, away from the prying eyes of the tyrants. No grand funeral, no public mourning—only the silent cries of his brothers and sisters who now carried his fight forward.

Sarim knelt beside Azad’s grave, his fingers tracing the freshly packed earth. "You were always the one who spoke of hope, Azad," he whispered. "Even in the

darkest times, you made us believe in a future beyond this cruelty. And now, you've become the reason we fight even harder."

Bakhtar, who had barely spoken since Azad's passing, clenched his fists. "They took one of us, but they don't realize what they've done. This fire will not die, Sarim. We will not let it."

Abdaal placed a hand on Sarim's shoulder. "The time for grief has passed, Comred. We have a war to win."

Sarim wiped the dampness from his face and stood. "Then we fight."

Zalaikha's Growing Resistance

While Sarim and his Comrades planned their next moves, Zalaikha had begun building something just as powerful. She met with the women of Jandool in hidden

chambers, in the marketplace, even in the shadows of their own homes.

"Our men are fighting," she told them. "But this is not their war alone. We have suffered under these rulers just as much. We have lost our fathers, our sons, our husbands. And still, they treat us as if we are too weak to fight back."

A woman named Yasmeen, whose brother had been killed for defying the rulers, raised her voice. "What can we do, Zalaikha? We have no weapons, no army."

Zalaikha’s eyes burned with conviction. "We have something stronger—unity. If the women of Jandool rise, the rulers will see that they have no control over us anymore. We will not be silent. We will not let them steal our future."

Word spread quickly. Women who had never dared to speak against the rulers now stood together, whispering

the names of their fallen loved ones, vowing to be the voice they could no longer raise.

The rulers, sensing the rising unrest, increased their brutality. More men were dragged from their homes in the middle of the night. Public punishments became common in the market squares. Soldiers roamed the streets, waiting for an excuse to spill blood.

But the Comrades did not stop.

Sarim and his fighters continued their resistance—burning the government's supply stores, freeing prisoners, spreading their message of defiance. The more the rulers tried to silence them, the louder their voices became.

One evening, as Sarim and his group gathered in a hidden passage beneath the city, a young boy ran to them, breathless. "They have taken Bakhtar!"

The words sent a chill through the air.

Sarim's heart pounded. "Where?"

"The central square. They mean to make an example of him."

The Comrades moved without hesitation.

When Sarim and his men reached the square, they saw Bakhtar bound to a wooden post. The governor of Jandool stood before him, his voice loud and cruel. "This is what happens to those who defy us! Let this be a lesson to all!"

Bakhtar, battered and bruised, still held his head high. His eyes found Sarim’s in the crowd, and he smirked—unafraid, unwavering.

"You think killing one of us will silence the rest?" Bakhtar’s voice echoed. "You think we are afraid of death?"

The people gasped as the governor raised his sword.

Sarim lunged forward, but Abdaal held him back.
"No, Comred. Not now. This is not how we win."

And then, with a single stroke, the sword fell.

Silence.

And then—an uproar.

People surged forward, shouting Bakhtar's name, cursing the rulers. Soldiers moved to strike them down, but for the first time, the people fought back. Stones flew. Fists landed. The crowd was no longer a group of frightened citizens. They were warriors.

## One Year of Fire

Bakhtar’s death had sent Jandool into chaos. The rulers struggled to control the uprising, but the resistance only grew stronger.

Sarim and his Comrades struck harder, moving from the shadows like ghosts. They freed prisoners, sabotaged supply lines, and recruited more fighters. Even those who once feared the rulers now stood beside them.

And then, one year after Bakhtar’s death, the final blow came.

Azad’s death had been painful. Bakhtar’s had been a rallying cry. But now, Jandool would suffer another heartbreak—Sarim’s closest friend, the one who had stood by him from the very beginning.

Azad’s sacrifice had been the spark.

Bakhtar’s had been the fire.

And now, Sarim would lose another brother to the flames.

The Death of Azad

Azad had been captured during an ambush. The rulers did not waste time. They had seen what happened when they let their enemies live too long.

The execution was set for dawn.

Sarim, Zalaikha, Abdaal, and the Comreds planned an attack, but the rulers had expected it. They were outnumbered, cornered.

As the sun rose, Azad stood before the executioner, smiling. He turned to the crowd, to Sarim, to his brothers and sisters.

"Do not cry for me," he said. "Cry for those who still believe they can rule us with fear."

And then, the sword fell.

For a moment, there was silence.

Then—the ground shook.

The people of Jandool erupted, their grief transforming into a storm. Sarim, tears streaming down his face, raised his fist to the sky.

"This ends now."

## The Fall of the Tyrants

The next few months were the bloodiest Jandool had ever seen. The rulers fought to hold their power, but the people had already won.

Women took to the streets, shouting the names of the fallen. Men stormed the governor’s palace, tearing down the banners of oppression. Soldiers abandoned their posts, unwilling to die for a lost cause.

And when the final ruler fell, Sarim stood among the ruins, his heart heavy but victorious.

Abdaal placed a hand on his shoulder. "It is done, Comred."

Zalaikha took his hand. "They are free."

Sarim looked at the sky, at the spirits of his fallen brothers.

"This is for you, Azad. This is for you, Bakhtar. And for every soul that dared to dream of freedom."

Jandool was theirs again.

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# Chapter 6:

## The Silent Storm

The wind of Jandool had changed.

It had been months since Azad's death, yet his voice still echoed in the alleyways where resistance had once stirred. Sarim, now hardened by loss and sharpened by purpose, walked the same streets—but his eyes saw differently. They were not filled with the wonder of revolution; they burned with pain.

Abdaal stood beside him, quieter than usual. The fall of their two closest comrades—first Bakhtar, now Azad—had wounded even him. But he did not bend. Instead, he became more still. And in that stillness, Sarim found his own strength.

Zalaikha moved like a whisper through the markets of Jandool, speaking to women in hushed tones.

She wore the pain of their losses not as weakness, but as armor. Her eyes had become weapons of conviction,

and her hands tools of compassion. The women of Jandool were no longer silent—they were learning from her, preparing for the storms to come.

But the cruel rulers were not idle either.

In hidden chambers, the most brutal of their forces—the secret black-cloaked ones—plotted to erase what remained of the resistance. And this time, they had their eyes set on something far deeper than protests or marches. They wanted to strike at Sarim's heart.

It was a dusky evening when the wind felt off—too still for Jandool.

Sarim had just returned from a late meeting with Abdaal and other Comrades. The plans were clear: another wave of peaceful resistance in the northern marketplace. But when he entered his home, the air was wrong. Something was missing.

His father's shoes weren’t by the door. His mother’s soft hum wasn’t echoing from the kitchen.

And Zalaikha—she hadn’t returned since the morning.

Panic didn’t come like a scream. It came like a whisper.

He searched every room. Empty. He ran to the neighbors. No one had seen anything. Not even the shopkeepers, who usually saw everything. It was as if they had vanished into thin air.

Within the hour, Sarim was in the streets. By midnight, the Comrades were split across Jandool, looking. Asking. Pressuring. But the people were silent—afraid. Eyes dropped. Doors shut early. The city was trembling under the weight of secrets.

Abdaal found Sarim in the old alley near the spice markets, hands trembling, a map spread before him.

“They took them, didn’t they?” Sarim’s voice was barely a whisper.

Abdaal placed a hand on his shoulder. “They did. And they want you to break.”

“But I won’t,” Sarim said through clenched teeth. “Even if they rip my heart out, I will not stop.”

Abdaal nodded slowly. “Then you are ready.”

Days passed. Then a week. Sarim and his Comrades turned Jandool upside down. Every alley. Every shadow. Every whisper. The secret forces that had kidnapped Zalaikha and Sarim’s parents were ruthless—but not flawless.

Bakhtar had once told Sarim, “Even darkness leaves footprints if you look closely enough.”

And so, they looked.

A witness finally spoke. A boy, no older than ten, had seen masked men force a woman into a cart near the river road. The cart bore no markings—except a torn red ribbon on the side.

That ribbon. Sarim knew it. It once belonged to his mother’s hair.

The lead took them to the old fort—the one long abandoned, rumored to be used by the secret state operatives. Sarim and four of his Comrades went by night. What they found was not Zalaikha or his parents—but clues.

Burned documents, iron shackles still warm, and a handkerchief with the embroidered letter Z.

Sarim held it like it was her hand. The fire in his chest grew colder, sharper.

The news came five days later.

A grave outside the village of Durshaan, unmarked. A shepherd had reported the smell.

Sarim arrived with Comrades and found two bodies.

His father. And Bakhtar’s younger brother, who had disappeared months ago.

No sign of Zalaikha or his mother.

The sorrow cracked Sarim like stone under hammer. Yet, in that grief, a storm was born.

He stood before the grave and declared:

“If they want to break me, they must first shatter the mountains. I will bury them under the same earth they used to bury our dreams.”

The winds in Jandool changed.

Where once there was fear, now there was fury.

Where once there were whispers, now there were voices—loud, defiant, echoing through every valley and village.

The Comrades, now hardened by grief and the blood of their own, became more than rebels. They were the soul of Jandool, wounded but unbroken.

Sarim was no longer just a leader—he had become a symbol.

Abdaal stood beside him like an unwavering mountain. He gave his final lessons not with words, but with actions. The resistance was now no longer a scattered effort; it was a movement, a revolution, spreading like wildfire.

Zalaikha… she was still missing.

But then, a letter arrived.

Written in trembling strokes.

Signed only: Z.

> “They keep us beneath the earth…

But even roots grow in darkness.

I am still breathing, Sarim.

I still love. I still wait."

The letter had reached through a dying guard who had been moved by her strength and smuggled it out.

Sarim held the letter to his chest and cried—not in weakness, but in the sacred silence of love remembered.

He knew: Zalaikha was still alive.

But not for long if they didn't act.

The Uprising Begins

On the 15th day of Sarwan, the Comrades attacked.

Not with swords—but with people.

Thousands, led by Sarim, marched toward the Governor’s Fort. Women, men, children—all chanting, not slogans of violence but the poetry of truth and justice.

Zalaikha’s influence had spread among women like wild jasmine—fragile in appearance but impossible to contain. They came forward in veils of resistance, their eyes sharper than swords.

Marketplaces that once echoed with silence now rang with cries:

> “We are not slaves. We are the storm!”

The rulers panicked.

They unleashed everything—forces, fire, fury.

And yet, the people didn’t stop.

Sarim’s father’s sacrifice. Bakhtar’s courage. Azad’s death. Zalaikha’s letters.

They were no longer memories. They were fuel.

That night, the fort fell.

The rulers fled like shadows before dawn.

Sarim stood at the highest balcony, looking over a city scarred but not surrendered.

A voice from below:

> “Comrade Sarim, what now?”

He looked at the horizon, tears in his eyes, Zalaikha’s handkerchief still tied around his wrist.

> “Now… we rebuild.

Not just the walls of Jandool…

But its soul.”

# *Summary*

"In the Name of the Fallen" is a sweeping tale of resistance, sorrow, and transformation set in the fictional region of Jandool.
At the center stands Sarim, a young dreamer turned unbreakable leader, who, under the mentorship of Abdaal and fueled by the love and sacrifices of his friends and beloved Zalaikha, rises against the cruelty and injustice of oppressive rulers.

The novel traces Sarim's journey from the lonely streets of a broken town to the bloody grounds of revolt. Alongside his Comrades—loyal friends like Azad, Bakhtar, and others—he endures countless imprisonments, betrayals, and unspeakable losses.
Bakhtar's death strikes the first heavy blow, but it is the brutal killing of Azad, Sarim's closest friend, that marks the deepest wound and the fiercest resolve among the resisters.

Even as the cruelty of rulers intensifies—targeting not just fighters but common people in markets and homes—Sarim and his Comrades refuse to bow.
Their struggle reaches its peak with the kidnapping and murder of Zalaikha and Sarim's father, devastating Sarim but also uniting the spirit of Jandool's people.

Through five long years of blood and sacrifice, Sarim's movement dismantles the tyrannical government, ushering in a new dawn of hope and freedom.

The novel portrays, with vivid emotion and fierce power, the truth that true change demands the highest cost—and those who fall along the way become immortal in the hearts of the free.

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## *Epilogue*

Years have passed, but the blood spilled by the fallen still nourishes the roots of freedom.

Sarim, carrying the memories of Azad, Bakhtar, Zalaikha, his father, and countless unnamed souls, walked through a Jandool transformed—not by magic, nor by miracles, but by the endurance of truth against the tyranny of lies.

The once-cruel rulers are now just footnotes in the chronicles of a liberated people.

Where fear once silenced streets, songs of freedom now echo in markets and fields.

But Sarim knows: peace is never a gift—it is a harvest of unrelenting struggle and endless sacrifice.

He stands not as a king or conqueror, but as a witness, a son of Jandool, forever bound by the names and dreams of the fallen.

In every laugh of a child, in every prayer whispered at dawn, their legacy breathes.

The fire they lit shall never die.

# *Glossary*

## *Character List*

Sarim — The main hero, leader of resistance, and symbol of hope.

Abdaal — Mentor to Sarim; former leader of resistance.

Zalaikha — Daughter of a merchant; Sarim's beloved and fellow struggler.

Bakhtar — Loyal Comrade; martyred in the cause of freedom.

Azad — Sarim's close friend and Comrade; a tragic martyr.

Sarim's Father — A wise supporter and guide of Sarim.

Saeed & Qayoom — Key antagonists representing cruelty.

Sherdil — A former antagonist, later supporter.

The People of Jandool — Victims of tyranny, later participants in the struggle.

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## *Timeline of Major Events*

Sarim’s Awakening

Formation of Resistance

First Waves of Protest and Imprisonment

Martyrdom of Bakhtar

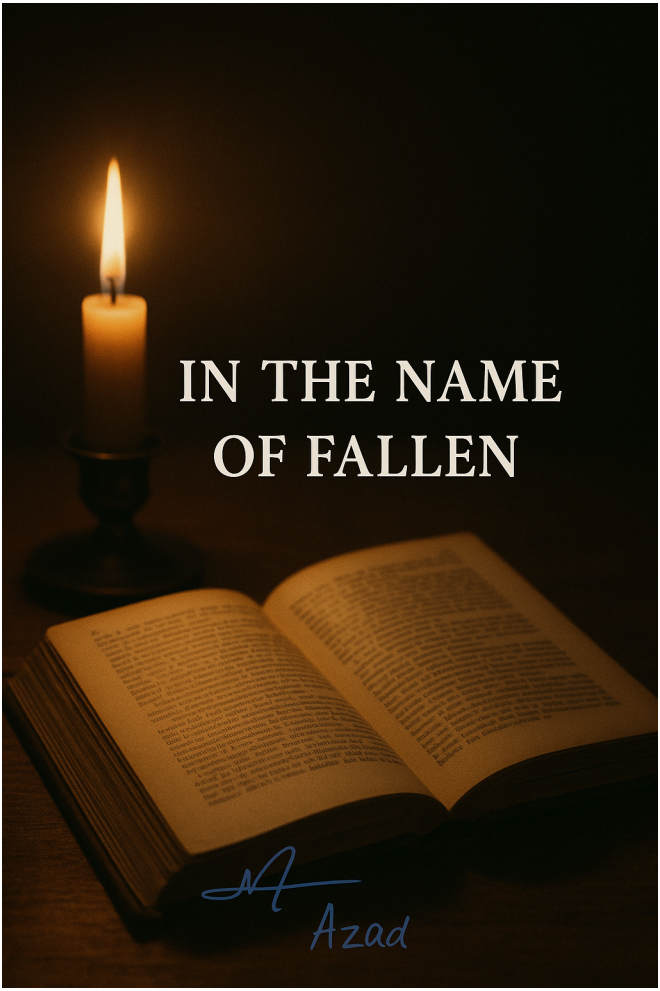
Martyrdom of Azad

Kidnapping and Death of Zalaikha and Sarim’s Father

The Fall of the Cruel Rulers

New Dawn for Jandool

**Thanks a lot…**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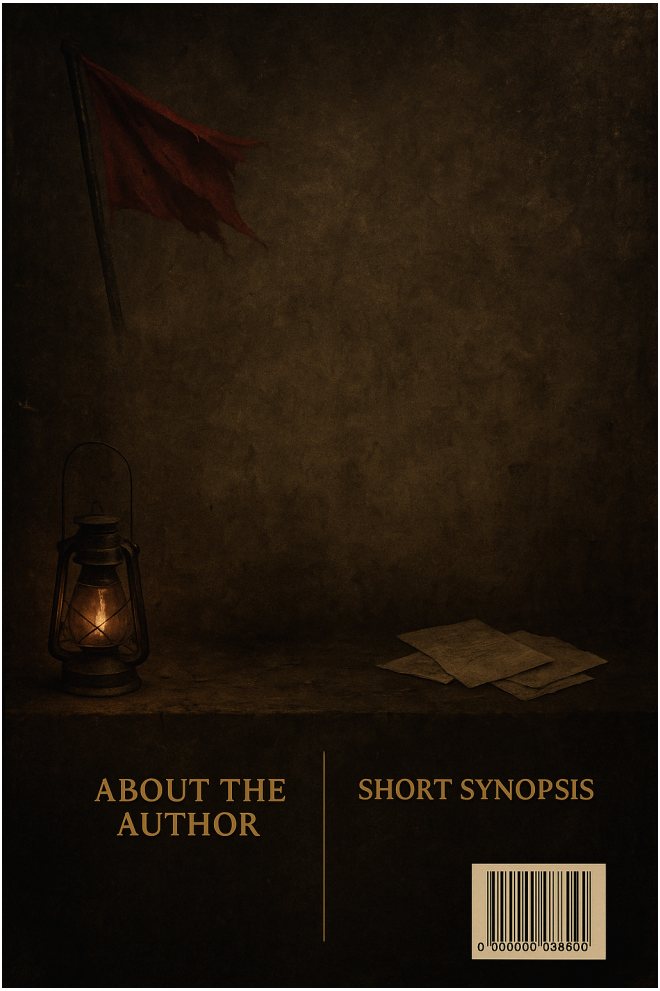
ABOUT THE AUTHOR
SHORT SYNOPSIS
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